

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



BARRIE LITERACY COUNCIL

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Kiwanis Club of Kempenfelt Bay

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VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

1. TUTOR : works one-on-one with an adult literacy student
2. CLASSROOM ASSISTANT: assists a variety of students in a classroom setting under the guidance of an instructor
3. BOARD MEMBER : attends monthly Board meetings in order to plan, co-ordinate and set policies which govern the day-to-day operations of the Council; expected to chair one of the Board committees
4. COMMITTEE MEMBER : serves on a committee of 4-6 persons to plan and implement specific Council activities.

Fundraising: plans and implements fundraising projects
Program Planning & Evaluation: evaluates the organization and the services provided and guides the Board in planning how to improve service
Finance: oversees the budgeting, spending and financial health of the Council
Social: plans and implements three social functions per year for volunteers and students, and provides refreshments at training workshops and Board meetings
Public Relations: plans how to increase awareness about the problems associated with low literacy, promote the work of the Barrie Literacy Council, and recruit students and volunteers
Volunteer Management: assists with the screening of volunteers, and recommends how the Council could better support volunteers after compiling feedback from surveys, focus groups and performance reviews
5. PHONER : calls 8-10 members to inform them of a training seminar or other upcoming event
6. SPECIAL EVENTS VOLUNTEER : commits several hours to a day working on a specific project (e.g. Road to Reading Festival, Family Literacy workshop, fundraising event)
7. PUBLIC SPEAKER : speaks to community organizations (on invitation) about the problems of low literacy and the work of the Barrie Literacy Council
8. DISPLAY VOLUNTEER : mans a display of Council materials at shopping malls, library, bookstores, etc., hands out brochures and talks to interested individuals
9. OFFICE HELPER : photocopies, collates and staples workshop packages, newsletters, Board packages, etc. at specific times during the year
10. COMPUTER TROUBLE-SHOOTER : solves problems which arise with computers or software on an on-call basis
11. TUTOR TRAINER : plans and leads tutor training workshops at least 3x per year

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Barrie Literacy Council
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Statement of Purpose:

We are here to help adults in our community to:

- improve their basic reading, writing and math skills
- use these skills in everyday living
- reach their own goals
- and improve their self-esteem.

Core Values:

1. We believe in the right of all adults to be fully participating members of our society.
2. We believe that what we do should be student-centered.
3. We believe that our services should be offered at no charge to our students.
4. We believe in using the teaching method that best suits the individual student.
5. We believe that one-to-one tutoring must be offered as one of our teaching methods.
6. We value creative and innovative approaches to improving our literacy service.
7. We believe that we learn by listening to our students, tutors, staff and partners.
8. We value volunteers as the heart of our organization and believe that volunteerism must remain the major delivery mechanism for our services.
9. We believe that we serve our students better by partnering with other literacy organizations and sharing knowledge.
10. We believe that we must carry out this work with enthusiasm, confidentiality, professionalism and respect for the individual.
11. We believe that a friendly, comfortable and safe working and learning environment is essential for staff, students and volunteers to achieve their potential.

Our Vision:

Our dream is to increase adult literacy in our community, one student at a time, and enable all individuals to reach their full potential.

Council Membership

1. Members shall be persons living in Barrie or the vicinity who have received training as approved by Laubach Literacy Ontario (as a student or a tutor), or persons who support the Barrie Literacy Council. Memberships shall be personal and are not transferable.
2. Full members are persons who have paid their membership fee or volunteer for the organization. The annual membership fee of \$10.00 is due on April 1st of each year. Tutors who have just completed their training are not required to pay a membership fee until the next fiscal year.

3. Privileges of membership include: the right to vote (at the annual general meeting in May), four issues of *Newsbeat* per year, and membership in Laubach Literacy Ontario.

Human Rights

1. Staff, volunteers and students of all ages, sexes, family and ethnic backgrounds, including those with disabilities, will be welcomed into our literacy program, according to our mandate and resources, and provided they meet the requirements for the position or our program.
2. The Council will attempt to provide appropriate accommodations for persons with disabilities so that participation in the program is not restricted.
3. All staff, volunteers and students should show respect for the unique differences of each individual. Discriminatory behaviour and insulting remarks will not be tolerated within the parameters of Council activities.

Privacy Policy

1. The Barrie Literacy Council collects personal information for the following purposes:
 - matching students and tutors
 - reference checks
 - contacting students and tutors for follow-up
 - providing statistical information to funders
 - distribution of newsletters
 - notification of seminars, events and Council activities
 - fundraising
 - program planning and evaluation
2. The Council limits the amount and type of information collected to that which is needed for these purposes. Forms used will be reviewed on a yearly basis.
3. Personal information will not be used for any purposes other than those identified at or before the time of collection. If personal information is required for any new purposes, the Council will seek consent prior to that use. The Council does not rent, sell or trade personal information with third parties.
4. By voluntarily providing information, students, volunteers and staff consent to the use of their personal information for the stated purposes.
5. Paper files are kept for three years after termination from the program. After that time, the files are shredded. Only basic information is retained on the computer.

6. All paper files containing personal information are stored in locked filing cabinets. Computer files are password protected.
7. The Council cannot guarantee security of any information which is transmitted over the internet, via e-mail or via cell phone. Bulk e-mails will be sent blind copied.
8. The Council does not disclose phone numbers of tutors or students to other tutors or students, except for the purposes stated in #1. It is the responsibility of the persons involved to exchange phone numbers as needed. It is recommended that new tutors not disclose their phone number until a relationship has been established and the volunteer is confident that the student will use the information appropriately. Tutors are encouraged to phone students using the office phone or use *67 to block Call Display when making calls from a home phone.
9. If anyone has any questions or concerns about the handling of personal information, please speak to a staff member. Staff will respond to these concerns immediately.

Public Relations

1. The Public Relations Committee will develop an outreach and marketing plan each year to ensure promotion of the Council throughout the year. Members are welcome to join this committee.
2. The Program Manager, the Council Chairperson or the Chair of Public Relations will speak on behalf of the Barrie Literacy Council to the media. Any media inquiries should be directed to the office.
3. If interviews or photos are requested, the Program Manager will obtain written permission of students and volunteers involved.
4. The Council maintains a list of volunteers who are willing to speak on behalf of the Barrie Literacy Council to community organizations. Only volunteers who have been specially trained or who are knowledgeable about the Council will be included on this list. Any requests for speakers should be directed through the office.
5. The Council maintains an up-to-date web-site: www.nald.ca/barrie.htm.

Safety and Security

1. Purses and other personal valuables should not be left unattended anywhere in the office.
2. Any suspicious-looking individuals loitering in the hallways should be reported to the office staff and/or Security on duty within the building.

3. Any malfunctioning equipment should be reported to the office staff and/or the Building Manager immediately.
4. Any safety hazards within the office or the building should be reported as soon as they are identified.
5. A list of emergency numbers, including ambulance, police, Building Security and the Building Manager are kept readily visible on the bulletin board in the office.
6. A first aid kit will be kept in the office in an accessible location in case of minor injuries. All staff have Emergency First Aid certificates.
7. Any staff, student or volunteer who has a serious health condition or allergies should disclose this information.
8. Volunteers or staff with a contagious disease are required to cease their duties (or their lessons) for as long as it takes to recover.
9. Volunteers and students are encouraged to meet at the office for tutoring sessions. The Council will not be held liable for incidents occurring to tutors or students who choose to meet in private homes. Special circumstances may make it mandatory to meet at the office.
10. Driving a student(s) is not part of a volunteer's job description. Whenever a volunteer drives a student, a waiver should be signed by the student releasing the Council and its volunteers from liability should any harm or injury result.
11. All staff, volunteers and students must be aware of proper fire drill procedures.
 - If a fire alarm sounds, all Council participants will exit the building in an orderly manner as quickly as possible through the nearest fire exit. Building fire exits will be posted in each classroom area.
 - Participants will assemble at a designated site (Tim Horton's), clear of the building and fire equipment.
12. Participants under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave and an incident report filed. The participants will receive a warning that if they come again under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they will no longer be able to attend the program.
13. Anyone involved in disruptive, dangerous or threatening behaviour will be asked to leave, and conditions given under which he/she may return (if any). Police will be contacted if necessary.
14. Serious incidents must be reported immediately to the office staff, including any accident involving students, staff or volunteers, serious illness or hospitalization, vandalism, actual or attempted theft, any actual or impending criminal behaviour, or any behaviour indicating potential or actual risk to program participants.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Policy: **Volunteers are expected to maintain a professional relationship with students, staff, and other members of the Council.**

Procedures:

1. All people who walk through our doors have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Threatening, intimidating, harassing, insulting, belittling or assaulting behaviour will not be tolerated at any time. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken, including possible termination of volunteer participation in the Council.
2. Unwanted comments, gestures, innuendos, contact, jokes or displays directed at members of the same or opposite sex will not be tolerated. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken, including possible termination.
3. Volunteers shall not borrow office supplies, equipment or computer software for personal use. Library books and videos shall be signed out before borrowing.
4. Volunteers are permitted to use the Council's Internet access for tutoring or Council-related purposes.
5. Volunteers are expected to dress with due regard to personal appearance and hygiene.
6. Smoking is not permitted in the building.
7. Volunteers under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while performing their duties will be asked to leave. If this behaviour reoccurs, the volunteer's participation in the Council may be terminated.
8. Volunteers are expected to be punctual. If more than fifteen minutes late, the volunteer should call the office and/or the person(s) affected. Chronic tardiness will be a matter for review.
9. If unable to meet commitments, volunteers are expected to call the office as early as possible so that the appropriate people can be notified.
10. All matters related to students, tutors, or Board business must be kept confidential. Volunteers will not disclose or make use of any confidential information during the term of volunteer service or any time afterwards.

Student Confidentiality

1. Volunteers must never reveal any identifying information about any student to anyone outside the Council without the specific written permission of the student.
2. The release of information form should be specific about:
 - to whom the information may be released
 - what information may be released
 - for what purpose
 - within what time frame if appropriateThe form must be signed by the student, dated and witnessed.
3. It is never appropriate to discuss one student with another student.
4. Within the Council, information which is pertinent to the student's progress may be shared or discussed with authorized and appropriate personnel.
5. Tutors will be encouraged to devise means of non-identifying contact if the student does not want anyone at his/her residence to be aware of his/her Council involvement.
6. Tutors will be encouraged to return the assessment information on termination with a student.

Reporting

1. A report form is posted on the bulletin board outside the office for tutors to record their weekly tutoring hours. At the end of each month, a staff person will record these hours in the database, both for student contact hours and for volunteer hours.
2. The Assessor phones the tutors who do not tutor in the office for tutoring hours each month and to discuss how tutoring is going. These hours are also recorded in the database.
3. When tutors have to discontinue tutoring or go on hold for longer than a month, they are asked to leave in the office a report of the student's progress, a list of the materials being used, and a copy of a demonstration (or work) recently completed.
4. Board members are asked to estimate the amount of time volunteered on a monthly basis and this is recorded in the individuals' computer files. Whenever members volunteer with other Council events, the activities and hours involved will be recorded on the individual's computer record.

Support and Supervision of Volunteers

1. Staff will make volunteer needs a priority and will make every effort to assist volunteers find needed resources or otherwise perform their duties.
2. If a tutor is having any difficulty with a student, the tutor should speak immediately to the Tutor/Student Liaison. If volunteers experience any other difficulties, they should speak immediately to the Program Manager.
3. At least twice a year, the tutor and student will meet with the Tutor/Student Liaison or Independent Student Mentor to review the student's progress.
4. Annually, the tutor will meet with the Tutor/Student Liaison to review the tutor's performance, to discuss supports needed (including training) and to give agency feedback. Board members will discuss their performance with a fellow Board member. Job descriptions and responsibilities will be reviewed and any suggestions for change brought forward as needed.
5. Volunteers have a right to be consulted on decisions affecting them. Regular feedback will be elicited from volunteers via questionnaires and surveys. Any suggestions or complaints received by the office staff will be documented and presented at a staff or Board meeting for discussion.
6. Opportunities will be provided for volunteers to meet with other volunteers to share experiences and gain valuable input. The times and frequency will depend on tutor surveys.
7. The Council will keep lines of communication open with volunteers through the newsletter, posting information on the bulletin boards, using a phone committee and/or handing out individual flyers. Volunteers will be informed of Council events, training opportunities, any upcoming provincial or national Laubach conferences, new policies or procedures, paid positions available within the literacy field, and any other information which affects them in any way.
8. Volunteers who have retired will be asked to complete a questionnaire in order to develop policies needed to better support our active volunteers.

Newsletters

1. Newsletters will be published four times a year.
2. All volunteers and students are welcome to submit articles to the office for publication in the newsletter.
3. Newsletters will be sent out by e-mail or may be picked up at the office.

Volunteer Training

1. The tutor training workshop surpasses minimum standards set by Laubach Literacy Ontario and conforms to any provincial standards set by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Volunteers in any position are encouraged to attend this workshop.
2. Volunteers are encouraged to attend sessions of subsequent workshops which they have missed or feel they need a refresher on. No further payment of workshop fee is required.
3. A minimum of two seminars are planned for tutors each year on topics which cannot be covered in depth at the workshop (e.g. math, comprehension, learning disabilities, computer software). These seminars will be advertised in the "Newsbeat" and on the bulletin board immediately outside the Council office. Tutors are asked to give feedback on training needed at annual performance reviews or through questionnaires.
4. Volunteers are informed of all training events held by the Simcoe/Muskoka Literacy Network or the provincial umbrella organizations. Tutors are encouraged to attend at least one training seminar per year.

Conferences

1. Money will be budgeted each year for volunteers and students to attend the Laubach conference. Total expenses (registration fee, accommodation and meals, travel) will be paid for those who have never attended a conference before, budget permitting. Any money remaining in the conference budget will be divided among others who wish to attend.
2. Whenever possible, members attending a conference should car-pool. The Council will pay travel expenses for the least expensive means of transportation which is practical in the situation.
3. If more tutors and students express interest in attending the conference than the Council can fully subsidize, total expenses will be paid on a first come basis. At least one student and one tutor will be subsidized to attend each conference.
4. Tutors and students must pay their conference registration fee and then submit receipts to the Council for reimbursement. If a student or tutor cannot afford the full registration fee, a partial registration payment may be made at the discretion of the office staff.
5. If the participant does not attend the conference, the registration fee will **not** be reimbursed.

Office Information

1. Usual hours of operation of the office are:
Monday to Thursday: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
2. The office will be closed for a two week period over Christmas and New Year's. It will also be closed on the following statutory holidays: Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day and Thanksgiving.
3. During the summer, office hours may be reduced if students and tutors plan to take a break from tutoring. A summer schedule may be proposed by staff after considering the needs of all students and tutors. This summer schedule will be posted by the beginning of June.
4. Staff will be on duty whenever the office is open. Council members may use the office after office hours (for tutoring or meetings) only with permission of the Program Manager or Board approval.
5. In cases of inclement weather, the office may be closed. Every attempt will be made to notify students and tutors who have booked tutoring rooms of the closure. An announcement of the closure will be made:
 - a. over the radio, if appropriate
 - b. on the answering machine
6. The bulletin board immediately outside the administrative office is used for:
 1. upcoming events either for volunteers or for students
 2. newspaper articles involving our volunteers or students
 3. messages for students from the student rep
 4. photos from special events
 5. recording tutoring hours
7. The other bulletin board for tutors at the back of the office common area is used for newsletters, interesting articles, job postings, requests for input from volunteers, etc.
8. Individual advertising (volunteers, students or others) will not be posted on either bulletin board.
9. Students and volunteers are encouraged to book use of the computers and/or use of the rooms in advance. When more people show up than there are rooms, priority of rooms will be given to those who have signed up. Others will have to meet or work in the open study area.
10. No soliciting of any kind is permitted in the office.
11. Our web site is www.nald.ca/barrie.htm

Books and Resources

1. Volunteers will be provided with appropriate resources to do their job. Books and materials will be loaned out to tutors, free of charge. When no longer needed, volunteers are expected to return books to the office library.
2. A list will be posted on the back bulletin board for volunteers and students to record titles or subjects of materials wanted.
3. Decisions to purchase library books or new learning materials will be based on:
 - a. the popularity and use of existing library materials
 - b. the requests and needs of volunteers and students
 - c. new books published in catalogues, especially the LLC catalogue
 - d. the remaining portion of the allocated budget
 - e. time within the budget year
4. The 20% discount which the Council receives on New Readers' Press materials will be passed along to members who wish to purchase books.
5. The Council has established and maintains a memorial fund in order to provide workbooks for students who cannot afford to purchase their own.
6. Volunteers and students will be informed of new library and software resources in the newsletter.
7. When library books are signed out, the card is dated one month from the day it is borrowed. This date is also written on the "Date due" slip in the back of the book. When the book is returned, the card is placed back into the back pocket and the book is returned to the shelf.
8. If library books are not returned after two months, the Administrative Assistant calls the person and asks that the book be renewed or returned. If after another month the book has still not been returned, office staff will send an invoice for the value of the book.
9. When workbooks and manuals (which are used as primary tools) are borrowed, the borrower should enter his/her first name and last initial, the name of the book and the date borrowed on the computer database in the outer office. When the book is returned, the date returned is entered on the original entry. There is no time limit on the length of time these materials may be borrowed.

Photocopying

1. There is no charge for photocopying lesson material for the student. We do charge 10 cents per copy for personal photocopying.
2. Please try to keep photocopying to a minimum. Encourage students to use blank notebooks and copy out their work, or borrow books whenever possible.

Technology Policy

1. Training on the computers will be provided for volunteers and students as needed in order to promote their learning.
2. Only software approved by and licensed to the Council will be installed on Council computers. The Council will respect all copyright and intellectual property laws and regulations.
3. Staff, tutors and students shall complete a computer use agreement prior to being allowed to use the Council's computers.
4. Connecting non-Council computers (including privately owned laptops) to the Council's computer network is not allowed.
5. Do not use private discs and flash drives (memory sticks) in Council computers without first getting permission of staff. Non-council media must be screened for viruses prior to their use.
6. Computers may be used only for legitimate Council activities, including: administration, preparation of study materials or lessons, learning software, e-mail correspondence with students, research and student employment purposes.
7. Computers may not be used to access Internet sites with inappropriate content such as pornography, racist or hate material, or to conduct personal business.

Volunteer Recognition

1. Tutors receive certificates as follows:
 - Senior Tutor certificate: 40 hours of tutoring
 - Advanced Tutor certificate: 175 hours of tutoring
 - Master Tutor certificate: 300 hours of tutoring plus 20 hours of extra seminars or literacy-related courses
2. Years of service by volunteers are recognized at the five and ten-year marks. Length of service does not necessarily mean consecutive years, but the recipient must have been active with the Council within six months of presentation of the award.
3. Awards are presented at the Annual General Meeting and dinner each year.
4. Volunteers will not be paid remuneration for their work, nor will the Barrie Literacy Council act as an agent in the hiring of paid tutors. If outside parties request a paid tutor (or instructor), a notice will be posted and the hiring will be the responsibility of the party requiring this service.

Social Events

1. The Social Committee will plan two social events a year in addition to the Annual General Meeting dinner in May. This could include a summer or fall barbecue, a Christmas party, an Open House tea or a Valentine party.
2. A small fee may be charged for social events and members may be asked to bring a potluck dish. The annual dinner will serve as a volunteer recognition event, and the costs will be subsidized whenever possible.
3. The talents of our own members will be used as much as possible for entertainment.

Cash Advances

1. If a cash advance is required by a committee or an individual for Council activities, a cheque will be issued "in trust". That individual becomes personally responsible for the money. A cash advance form must be completed.
2. Following the purchase, the individual will submit receipts plus change totalling the cash advance amount. The receipts should be summarized on a "Cash Advance Distribution" sheet. This must be submitted within one month of the date of the advance.

Fundraising

1. The Barrie Literacy Council approves an annual fundraising plan which conforms to ethical fundraising and accountability guidelines.
2. All solicitation of funds must be made with the approval of the Fundraising Committee or the Board of Directors in order to prevent duplication of requests and ensure consistency of approach.
3. The Council welcomes donations from its volunteers.
4. Official receipts for income tax purposes will be given for any donations over \$10 or if a receipt is requested.
5. Under no circumstances, will the Council share its fundraising list with any other organization.

Office Staff

Who's who? Who does what?

Program Manager: Connie Morgan

- Manages the office; oversees staff
- Acts as liaison with the Board; assists Board members
- Completes applications, surveys and reports for funders or umbrella organizations

Administrative Assistant: Marlene Clement

- Maintains the data bases in the computer and retrieves data as necessary
- Maintains the library and resources
- Orders office supplies

Assessor: Karena Holgate

- Screens and assesses all new students to the program
- Matches tutors and students
- Prepares introductory lessons for new tutors
- Meets with tutors and students to design learning plans

Tutor/Student Liaison: Joy Mitchell

- Follows up with the matches (tutors and students)
- Prepares demonstration activities for ongoing assessment
- Updates learning plans
- Reviews performance with tutors

Small Group Instructor: Joy Mitchell

- Leads small groups of students in basic reading, writing and math

Independent Student Mentor: Stephanie Duprey

- Assists students who are working independently
- Prepares and updates learning plans for these students

Classroom Instructor: Gary Campbell

- teaches classroom students (four days per week)
- prepares and updates learning plans for classroom students

Newsbeat Editor: Nelia Hutt

- prepares a newsletter for members four times per year

